

The Honorable Benjamin H. Settle

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
WESTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON AT SEATTLE**

SHILLING, et al.,

Plaintiffs,

v.

DONALD J. TRUMP, in his official capacity as
President of the United States, et al.,

Defendants.

Case No. 2:25-cv-241

**DECLARATION OF MATTHEW
MEDINA IN SUPPORT OF
PLAINTIFFS' MOTION FOR
PRELIMINARY INJUNCTION**

I, Matthew Medina, declare as follows:

1. My name is Matthew Medina. I am a plaintiff in the above-captioned action. I have actual knowledge of the matters stated in this declaration.

2. I am a 23-year-old transgender man, and I live in Kearny, New Jersey. I live with my mother and my 12-year-old sister.

3. I am a member of the Gender Justice League.

4. Right now, I work at Chipotle as a cook. I am the oldest child in my family, and I joined the work force when I was 15 years old to help my mother out.

5. I want to join the military because I want to be able to take care of my family with a stable income. I was raised by a single mother, and I have watched her struggle to provide for

us. I want to be able to help my mother, and I want to invest in my little sister's childhood.

6. Joining the military would also allow me to pursue further education. I want to be able to get a Bachelor's degree to have further opportunities. No one in my family has ever been to college before; if I was able to get my degree, I would be the first one. Without enlisting, I would not be able to afford higher education.

7. I also hope to build a family with my partner, and I believe the military would help me launch my family.

8. I have been preparing to join the military for the past year. I have been speaking with a recruiter for the U.S. Marine Corps and have my documents ready for enlistment. I also started the process for tattoo removal so I will be eligible to enlist. Money is tight for my family, but I made the decision to sacrifice my current financial stability to invest in tattoo removal in order to receive the future stability the military can give me. I have been working hard to get in shape to meet the physical requirements for the Marines.

9. Since I was young, I have felt like I've been on the losing side of everything – life, school, money. I want to feel like a winner for once, and the Marines are the best and bravest. I haven't had many role models in my life, and I want what the Marines offer – a brotherhood to share in, to support me and impart wisdom.

10. When I heard about the Executive Order, I felt crushed. It was disheartening to say the least. I felt like I was in high school again – picked on, bullied, put down – all because of how I identify.

11. Since then, I've been feeling disconnected. I've been going to work mindlessly, spending a lot of time in bed, feeling very apathetic. I feel like all of my hard work to get my documents ready and get in shape was for nothing. I've been spending a lot of time trying to keep up to date on how the order is being enforced. The uncertainty on top of the fear I feel

1 makes this even more difficult. I'm trying to keep myself in shape and keep my mind busy but
 2 it's been really tough. I thought I had found a way to create stability for myself and my family.
 3 With the chance to join the military being taken from me, I feel like I've lost hope that I will
 4 improve my situation.

5 12. If I wait four more years to enlist, I will be at risk of never making it in. The
 6 Marines have an age cap of 28-years-old. Even if the next administration reversed this policy, it
 7 might not be in time for me to enlist before I age out.

8 13. I am transgender. I was assigned the sex of female at birth. However, I have
 9 known since I was about 6 or 8 years old. I didn't know what being transgender was at the time,
 10 but I vividly remember being uncomfortable in my body while I underwent puberty, and
 11 knowing what was happening to my body did not align with how I felt about myself. I came out
 12 to my mother when I was 13 years old and while she struggled at first, we sought counseling, and
 13 in the end she finally understood me for who I was and continues to love me unconditionally.

14 14. In consultation with health care professionals, I have taken clinically appropriate
 15 steps as part of my medical transition. I have been taking testosterone since I was 16 years old. I
 16 am very grateful for the changes it has created in my body, that are better aligned with my
 17 gender identity. I feel happy and have more energy. I also underwent top surgery in December
 18 2023. I was excited to stop binding and recovered well with no complications.

19 15. I have taken legal steps to transition. A judge granted my name change in July of
 20 last year. I also changed my first name and gender marker on my birth certificate, driver's
 21 license, and social security card.

22 16. Because I have wanted to enlist in the military for many years, I have followed
 23 the policies about service by transgender people closely. During President Trump's last term, I
 24 remember being shocked to hear that there was a movement to ban transgender people from

1 serving. The military is about service, and no one should be prevented from serving their country
 2 the best way they can. If I am able to meet the requirements for enlistment, I should be allowed
 3 to serve just like anyone else.

4 17. I also felt – and feel – like there is no reason the military shouldn't allow
 5 everyone access to the opportunities the military offers if they are willing and able to serve.
 6 Financial instability affects everyone, it doesn't feel fair to have transgender people be robbed of
 7 the change to build a foundation for themselves and their families.

8 18. If permitted to do so, I would seek commission into the military. My career plan
 9 is to enlist into the Marines as an aircraft maintenance specialist and pursue my bachelor's degree
 10 for career advancement in my selected field, preferably somewhere in aerospace engineering. I
 11 would like to serve for at least 10 years and hope to put an end to the generational poverty that
 12 affects me and my family to this very day.

13 19. The Executive Order's policy suggests that I am not a real man. I am a man, and I
 14 am fit to serve as a man. The policy feels like a charade to drive us even further, putting in danger
 15 existing unit cohesion and requiring military service members to live inauthentically if they want
 16 to continue or begin their service to our country.

17 20. Based on my male identity and appearance, there is no way I could use female facilities in a
 18 military environment. It would make me deeply uncomfortable. If I am forced to use female
 19 facilities, I will not be able to join the military.

20 21. By implementing this discriminatory ban, the President of the United States, the Secretary of
 21 Defense, and the Department of Defense have sought to mark me as inferior, marginalize me,
 22 declare that my very identity is dishonorable, and stigmatize me. In doing so, they have caused
 23 me great distress, discomfort, and pain. It feels like I am being bullied in high school again, for
 24 no legitimate reason.

22. All that I want is to live openly as the man I am and to be treated with respect and dignity by the military.

I declare under the penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

DATED: February 12, 2025


Matthew Medina (Feb 13, 2025 15:47 EST)
MATTHEW MEDINA